

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /079 W
-----073858 051103Z /13

R 050736Z JAN 78
FM USINT BAGHDAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5443
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 0012

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, XF, IZ
SUBJECT: IRAQI VIEWS ON MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM AND HORN OF
AFRICA

REF: STOCKHOLM 5304 (NOTAL)

1. SWEDISH FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS ACCOMPANYING
NEW SWEDISH AMBASSADOR TO FRANCE ON HIS VISIT TO BAGHDAD
HAVE BRIEFED USINT ON THEIR RECENT TALKS WITH MINISTER
OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAMID ALWAN. ADDRESSEES
WILL NOTE THAT ALWAN'S REPORTED VIEWS DIFFER IN IMPORTANT
RESPECTS FROM WHAT IS GENERALLY UNDERSTOOD AS IRAQI POLICY.

2. ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE: ALWAN SAID THAT IRAQ WOULD
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ACCEPT ESTABLISHMENT OF A PALESTINIAN STATE ON THE WEST
BANK IF IT MET WITH UNANIMOUS AGREEMENT OF PLO EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE. (COMMENT: SINCE "UNANIMOUS AGREEMENT" WOULD
REQUIRE AFFIRMATIVE VOTE BY IRAQI-CONTROLLED ALF, THIS
SOFTENING OF TRADITIONAL IRAQI OPPOSITION TO SOLUTIONS
WHICH ACCEPT EXISTENCE OF ISRAEL AS ZIONIST STATE MAY BE
MORE APPARENT THAN REAL.)

3. SYRIA: ALWAN INDICATED IRAQ WAS SEEKING TO END ITS RIFT WITH SYRIA BY INVITING DAMASCUS REGIME TO COME TO CONFRONTATION AND STEADFASTNESS CONFERENCE IN BAGHDAD. NONETHELESS, HE REITERATED OPPOSITION TO ASAD GOVERNMENT AS AN ILLEGITIMATE MILITARY REGIME WHICH HAD USURPED POWER FROM REAL BAATH PARTY MEMBERS AND HAD GONE ON TO ACCEPT UNSC RESOLUTION 338 (COMMENT: SWEDES FOUND THIS CONCILIATORY, BUT WE DOUBT IT WOULD BE READ THAT WAY IN DAMASCUS.)

4. EGYPT: ALWAN REGRETTED SADAT INITIATIVES, WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS DOOMED TO FAILURE, BUT DID NOT USE TERMS OF INVECTIVE. PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY IRAQI SPOKESMEN AND MEDIA COVERAGE CONTINUE TO SCORN SADAT AS A TRAITOR.

5. HOR: ALWAN CLAIMED THAT RECENT HIGH LEVEL ETHIOPIAN DELEGATION CAME AT IRAQI INITIATIVE AND WAS PART OF IRAQI EFFORT TO MEDIATE ETHIOPIA'S DISPUTES WITH SOMALIS AND ERITREANS. (COMMENT: OFFICIAL IRAQI STATEMENTS AT TIME OF MANSITTA DESTA VISIT STRESSED THAT VISIT WAS AT ETHIOPIA'S REQUEST. WE SUSPECT, HOWEVER, THAT SOVIETS MAY HOPE TO DRAW IRAQ INTO MEDIATORY ROLE.) ALWAN SAID IRAQIS TOLD DESTA THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WAS FOLLOWING POLICIES OF SELASSE REGIME. DESTA REPORTEDLY INDICATED CONFIDENTIAL

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WILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER AUTONOMY FOR ERITREA BUT NOT FOR OGADEN. ALWAN TOLD SWEDES THAT IRAQ CONSIDERED OGADEN A PART OF SOMALIA WHICH COLONIALIST POWERS HAD WRONGLY JOINED TO ETHIOPIA.

6. BILATERAL: IRAQIS GAVE CONFLICTING SIGNALS. MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY SAID SWEDES MUST BUY MORE IRAQI CRUDE IF IT WANTED TO KEEP EXPORTING TO IRAQ AT PRESENT LEVEL. MINISTER OF TRADE SAW NO PROBLEM IN TRADE IMBALANCE.

7. COMMENT: ALWAN IS WELL-CONNECTED BAATH PARTY MEMBER WHO IS CLOSE TO SADDAM HUSSEIN AND GENERALLY THOUGHT TO HAVE MORE POLICY INFLUENCE THAN FOREIGN MINISTER HAMMADI. ALWAN IS NOT, HOWEVER, SUCH A CAREFUL MOUTHPIECE FOR REGIME POLICY. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SOME OF HIS REMARKS REFLECT PERSONAL VIEWS AND THAT HE WAS ALSO FOLLOWING COMMON ARAB PRACTICE OF TELLING PEOPLE WHAT THEY WANT TO HEAR. SWEDES APPEARED TO HAVE BEEN IMPRESSED WITH MODERATION OF IRAQI POSITIONS GIVEN ABOVE.
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